



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

# Further Education for Benefit Claimants

England

2014/15 final statistics

Official Statistics Series

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# Contents

<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Glossary .....	6
Abbreviations .....	8
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Results .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Learners on Further Education Training claiming benefits .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Learners by benefit type .....	13
Highest Level of Learning .....	13
Benefit Spells with Training .....	14
Apprenticeships and Traineeships .....	16
Learning aims by benefit type .....	19
<b>Supplementary Tables .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Annex A: Additional Information .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Annex B: Matching Process, Data Coverage and Quality .....</b>	<b>26</b>

# Executive summary

This publication presents information on Further Education (FE) activity<sup>1</sup> funded by the Skills Funding Agency for adult<sup>2</sup> benefit claimants<sup>3</sup> in England. It includes final data for the 2009/10 to 2014/15 academic years on: learners who were on benefits at the start of further education training; highest level of qualification studied; benefit spells with training by type of benefit; apprenticeship starts by individuals claiming benefits before the start of training; and traineeships on benefits.

This is the fifth release in the series, which are published once a year. Further development work will continue to improve the statistics produced, as knowledge of the underlying data source develops.

## Main findings for 2014/15

### Learners on Further Education Training claiming benefits

- In the matched dataset 29 per cent of the 1,852,700 learners aged 19-64, were on benefit at the start of FE training. This is an increase of 1.4 percentage points from 2013/14 (27.6 per cent).
- However, the number of learners aged 19-64 who were on benefit at the start of training has decreased by 20.5 per cent to 537,500 learners on benefit at the start of FE training from 676,000 in 2013/14. This decrease is consistent with the fall in overall number of claimants on out-of-work benefits.
- Of all the learners on benefit at the start of training, 24.5 per cent were aged 19-24. The number of learners fell by 23.3 per cent to 131,500 compared with 2013/14.
- The number of learning aims started by learners on benefit decreased by 21.4 per cent from 1,680,800 in 2014/15 to 1,320,900 in 2013/14.

### Learners by benefit type

The majority (70.3 per cent) of benefit claimants aged 19-64 undertaking training were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in the Work-Related Activity Group (WRAG). This is a decrease on the 76.5 per cent for the previous academic year.

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<sup>1</sup> Further Education includes provision delivered in Further Education organisations, sixth form colleges, independent training organisations, local authorities and other providers. This includes programmes such as Apprenticeships but excludes Adult Community Learning.

<sup>2</sup> Those aged 19 to 64 years old.

<sup>3</sup> Benefit claimants are defined as claimants on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) (including Training Allowance (TA)), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support (IS), Incapacity Benefit (IB), Passported Incapacity Benefit (PIB), Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA), and Pension Credit (PC). This publication does not include training started by Universal Credit (UC) claimants.

## Highest qualification level started by claimants

- The largest proportion (87.7 per cent) of learners on benefits aged 19-64 who undertook training studied at Level 2 or below as their highest qualification studied, of which:
  - 122,600 learners (22.8 per cent) studied at Entry level
  - 172,700 learners (32.1 per cent) studied at Level 1
  - 176,200 learners (32.8 per cent) studied at Level 2
  - Among learners on benefits aged 19-24 years, the highest level of study was at Level 2 or below (83.9 per cent).

## Benefit spells with training

- There has been a 20.9 per cent decrease in benefit spells with training on the previous academic year, from 690,800 benefits spells with training in 2013/14 to 546,600 in 2014/15.
- 349,500 Jobseekers Allowance benefit spells involved training in 2014/15, which made up 15.4 per cent of all Jobseeker's Allowance benefit spells, down slightly from 16.3 per cent in 2013/14.

## Apprenticeships and Traineeships

- There were 39,500 apprenticeship starts by learners aged 19-64 years claiming benefits in the six months before starting their apprenticeship. This is a decrease in overall numbers from 45,900 in 2013/14 (a 13.8 per cent decrease). There were 24,600 starts by learners aged 19-24, a decrease of 7,700 from 2013/14 (23.8 per cent).
- The fall is driven by the national decrease in those on benefits. Additionally the increase in overall apprentices (particularly for the 25 and over age group) means the percentage of apprentices claiming benefits in the six months before their apprenticeship has decreased from 14.9 per cent in 2013/14 to 10.9 per cent in 2014/15.
- There were 7,800 traineeship starts aged 19-24 in 2014/15<sup>4</sup>. Of the 5,600 traineeships started by learners aged 19-24 claiming benefit in the matched dataset there were
  - 4,900 claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG).

## Learning aims

- The average number of aims started per claimant was 2.5, which is the same as for 2013/14.

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<sup>4</sup> Further Education and Skills Statistical First Release

- The number of learning aims started by benefit claimants aged 19-64 years decreased by 21.4 per cent from 1,680,800 in 2013/14 to 1,320,900 in 2014/15.
- There were 199,800 aims started by benefit claimants aged 19-64 in English and Maths courses in 2014/15 at Level 2 or below, making up 15.1 per cent of all aims started.

# Glossary

## Measurement Units

**Claimants:** A claimant is defined as an individual who claims a DWP benefit. When counting claimants, there is a single record per claimant in any one academic year, regardless of whether they had more than one benefit spell, or undertook multiple training spells.

**Learners:** When an individual starts a programme of learning with a Further Education (FE) provider, they are allocated a learner record. A learner is counted as being 'on benefit at the start of learning' where they have a benefit claim which overlaps the learning start date. A learner will be counted in each year they started a learning aim.

**Learning Aims:** An aim is the term used for a course a learner is studying and is counted in the year the learning started. Examples of aims include BTECs, NVQs and individual GCSEs and A levels. Many learners will be studying for several aims at once or in sequence, as part of a programme of study.

**Benefit Spell:** A benefit spell is defined as a continuous period of time receiving the same benefit type. There can be multiple benefit spells per claimant, either of the same benefit type or different ones.

## Further Education Learning

**Academic Year:** Runs from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July. The learning period covered in the publication runs from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

**Apprenticeships:** Paid jobs that incorporate on and off the job training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. As an employee, apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills in the workplace. For further information, please see: <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

**Full Level 2:** Equivalent to a NVQ at Level 2 or 5 GCSEs. The widths of all of a learner's Level 2 aims are summed to establish whether a learner is taking a full level 2 programme.

**Full Level 3:** Equivalent to a NVQ at Level 3 or 2 A-Levels. The widths of all of a learner's Level 3 aims are summed to establish whether a learner is taking a full level 3 programme.

**English and Maths:** Qualifications designed to give people the reading, writing, maths, and communication skills they need in everyday life, to operate effectively in work, and to help them succeed on other training courses.

**Traineeship:** Traineeships were introduced in the 2013/14 academic year to provide young people with essential work preparation, English, maths and work experience to secure an apprenticeship or other work.

## **Benefits**

The benefits included in this publication are:

- Jobseeker's Allowance including Training Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Incapacity Benefit
- Passported Incapacity Benefit
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Pension Credit

Further information on benefit types can be found at [www.gov.uk/dwp](http://www.gov.uk/dwp).

This publication does not include training started by Universal Credit (UC) claimants (see '**Universal Credit claimants**' and '**Personal Independence Payments**' on pages 29 and 30 for further details).

# Abbreviations

<b>BIS</b>	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
<b>DWP</b>	Department for Work and Pensions
<b>ESA</b>	Employment and Support Allowance
<b>ESA (WRAG)</b>	Employment and Support Allowance (Work-Related Activity Group)
<b>ESOL</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages
<b>FE</b>	Further Education
<b>HMRC</b>	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
<b>IB</b>	Incapacity Benefit
<b>ILR</b>	Individualised Learner Record
<b>IS</b>	Income Support
<b>JCP</b>	Jobcentre Plus
<b>JSA</b>	Jobseeker's Allowance
<b>PC</b>	Pension Credit
<b>PIB</b>	Passported Incapacity Benefit
<b>PIP</b>	Personal Independence Payment
<b>SDA</b>	Severe Disablement Allowance
<b>TA</b>	Training Allowance
<b>UC</b>	Universal Credit
<b>WPLS</b>	Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study



# Introduction

## Background

The Education and Skills Act 2008 allowed the sharing of data between the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

A joint BIS-DWP analytical project was set up to develop a matched database of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS). The ILR contains information on Further Education provision funded by the Skills Funding Agency in England. The WPLS includes information on benefit data held by the Department for Work and Pensions and earnings and employment data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. Data matching began in January 2009 with a proof of concept exercise and is now carried out regularly. Further information on the datasets, matching process, quality assurance and match rates are included in Annex B at the end of this document.

The statistics in this publication are produced using the matched dataset of the ILR and the WPLS. Work will continue to improve the statistics further as knowledge of the underlying data source develops.

These statistics reflect the policy and economic context during this period. In recent years, BIS and DWP have worked together closely to refine and target the type of training support provided to benefit claimants. In addition, the volume of training starts provides a good indication of the demand for training (ie the number of benefit claimants either self-referring or referred to training by Jobcentre Plus).

## Scope

This publication presents information on Further Education activity funded by the Skills Funding Agency for adult benefit claimants in England. Further Education includes provision delivered in Further Education organisations, sixth form colleges, independent training organisations, local authorities and other providers including training undertaken as part of Apprenticeship and Traineeship programmes, but excludes Adult Community Learning and Offender Learning. It contains final data for the 2009/10 – 2014/15 academic years, where the academic year runs from 1 August to 31 July.

Most tables relate to learners on benefit aged 19 to 64, with the exception of the Apprenticeships and Traineeships tables which include starts by claimants aged under 19 for the first time. All figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and figures below 50 are suppressed for confidentiality purposes.

The publication provides statistics on learners who were on benefits at the start of further education training, highest level of qualification studied, benefit spells with training by type of benefit, apprenticeship starts by individuals claiming benefits before the start of training, and traineeships on benefits. The headline measures reported represent a summary of a complex set of data.

The benefits included in this publication are:

- Jobseeker's Allowance including Training Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Incapacity Benefit
- Passported Incapacity Benefit
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Pension Credit

It is important to note that training by Universal Credit claimants and Personal Independence Payment claimants are not included in this publication.

Supplementary tables can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-innovation-skills/series/further-education-for-benefit-claimants](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-innovation-skills/series/further-education-for-benefit-claimants). These tables include more detailed breakdowns for learners aged 19-24 years and by JCP District.

## Contact details

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DWP Press Office on 020 3267 5144  
BIS Press Office on 020 7215 3234

Or view our websites at:

[www.gov.uk/dwp](http://www.gov.uk/dwp)  
[www.gov.uk/bis](http://www.gov.uk/bis)

# Results

## Learners on Further Education Training claiming benefits

In the matched dataset 29 per cent of the 1,852,700 learners aged 19-64, were on benefit at the start of FE training (Table 1). This is an increase of 1.4 percentage points from 2013/14 (27.6 per cent)

**Table 1: Learner starts for adults aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64 by benefit status, 2013/14 to 2014/15**

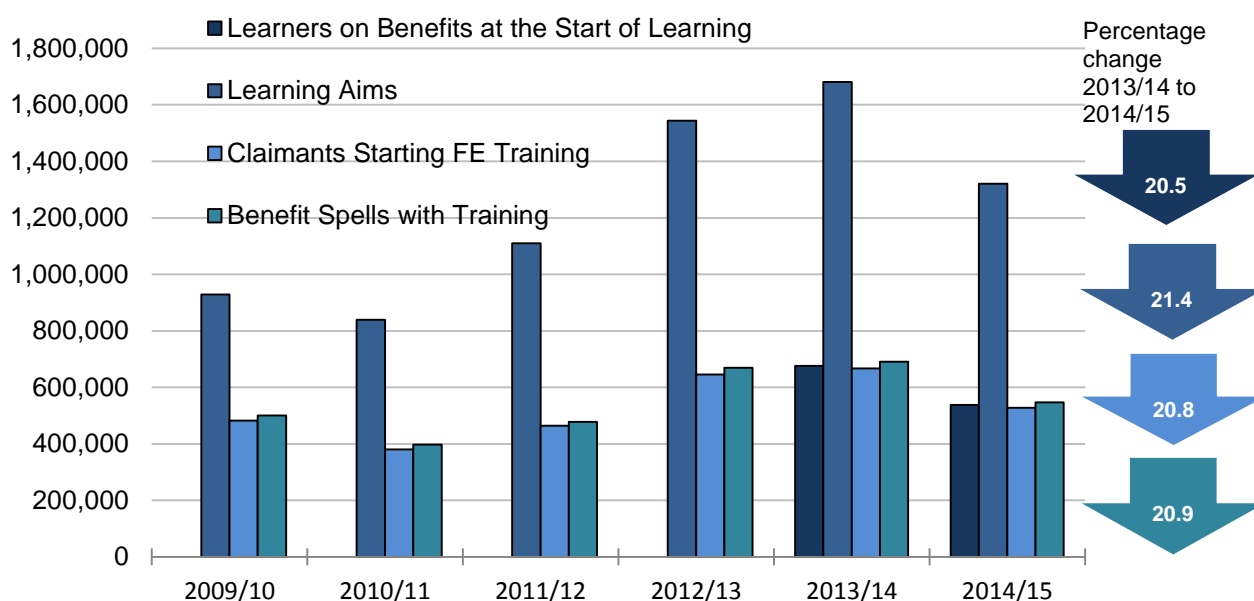
	2013/14	2014/15
All Learners <sup>2</sup>	2,447,000	1,852,700
of which on Benefit at Learning Start	676,000	537,500
% on Benefit	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is considered.

2. All learners is the number of learners starting at least one aim within the year, regardless of whether the learner was on benefit at the start. Note that only matched data is included in this publication, i.e. where a match has been found between the ILR and WPLS. Figures will not match BIS' Statistical First Release on Post 16 Education and Skills as not all learners therein will have been matched to a benefit and/or employment record. Figures will also differ from BIS' Statistical First Release on Post 16 Education and Skills as they exclude training under 'Community Learning' and 'Offender Learning', which are included in the First Release.

However, the number of learners aged 19-64 who were on benefit at the start of training has decreased by one-fifth to 537,500 learners from 676,000 in 2013/14 (Figure 1). This decrease is consistent with the fall in overall number of claimants on out-of-work benefits.

**Figure 1: Number of learners aged 19-64 on benefits, 2009/10 to 2014/15**



Of all the learners on benefit at the start of training, 24.5 per cent were aged 19-24. The number of learners aged 19-24 fell by 23.3 per cent to 131,500 compared with 2013/14.

There has been a decrease in the other measures of Further Education (FE) training for benefit claimants between the 2013/14 and 2014/15 academic years (Table 2).

For learners aged 19-64 on benefits:

- The number of learning aims started by learners on benefits decreased by 21.4 per cent from 1,680,800 in 2013/14 to 1,320,900 in 2014/15
- In 2014/15, the average number of learning aims studied per claimant remained the same as the previous academic year at 2.5 learning aims.

For benefit claimants<sup>5</sup> aged 19-64 starting FE training

- Benefit spells with training have declined by 20.9 per cent from 690,800 in 2013/14 to 546,600 in 2014/15
- Benefit claimants starting training have on average one benefit spell with training in an academic year.

**Table 2: Summary of further education training for benefit claimants aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64, 2009/10 to 2014/15 academic years**

Unit	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Learners on Benefits at the Start of Learning <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	676,000	537,500
Learning Aims <sup>3</sup>	929,000	839,300	1,110,300	1,544,200	1,680,800	1,320,900
Benefit Spells with Training <sup>4</sup>	500,600	397,700	477,500	668,700	690,800	546,600
Claimants Starting Training <sup>5</sup>	482,600	379,800	464,400	645,800	666,700	527,700

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is used.

2. Due to a change in methodology from the 2013/14 publication, it is not possible to produce figures for the number of Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning prior to 2013/14 - please see Glossary in main publication for more information.

3. A learning aim is a course a learner is studying and is counted in the year the learning started.

4. A benefit spell is defined as a continuous period of time claiming the same benefit. Benefit spells with training refer to benefit claims which occurred in the academic year of reference where the benefit claimant started training.

5. The count of 'Claimants Starting Training' is slightly lower than the count of 'Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning' because the latter is based upon a count of the number of Unique Learner Numbers (ULN) in the ILR and in a small number of cases learners can be allocated multiple ULNs.

For learners aged 19-24 on benefits (Table 1, Supplementary Tables):

- The number of learning aims declined by 21.2 per cent from 439,900 learning aims in 2013/14 to 346,600 in 2014/15
- There has been a 23.3 per cent decrease in benefit claimants starting Further Education training from 168,900 in 2013/14 to 129,500 in 2014/15

<sup>5</sup> The count of 'Claimants Starting Training' is slightly lower than the count of 'Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning' due to differences in the way the WPLS and ILR data identify unique individuals.

- The volume of benefit spells with training decreased by the same proportion (23.3 per cent) from 175,600 spells in 2013/14 to 134,700 in 2014/15.

### Learners by benefit type

In 2014/15, 70.3 per cent of benefit claimants aged 19-64 years undertaking training claimed JSA or ESA (WRAG). This is a decrease on the 76.5 per cent for the previous academic year (Table 3).

**Table 3: Learners aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64 on benefit by benefit type, 2014/15**

	2013/14		2014/15	
Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (WRAG)	517,300	76.5%	377,800	70.3%
Other benefits <sup>2</sup>	158,800	23.5%	159,700	29.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>676,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>537,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

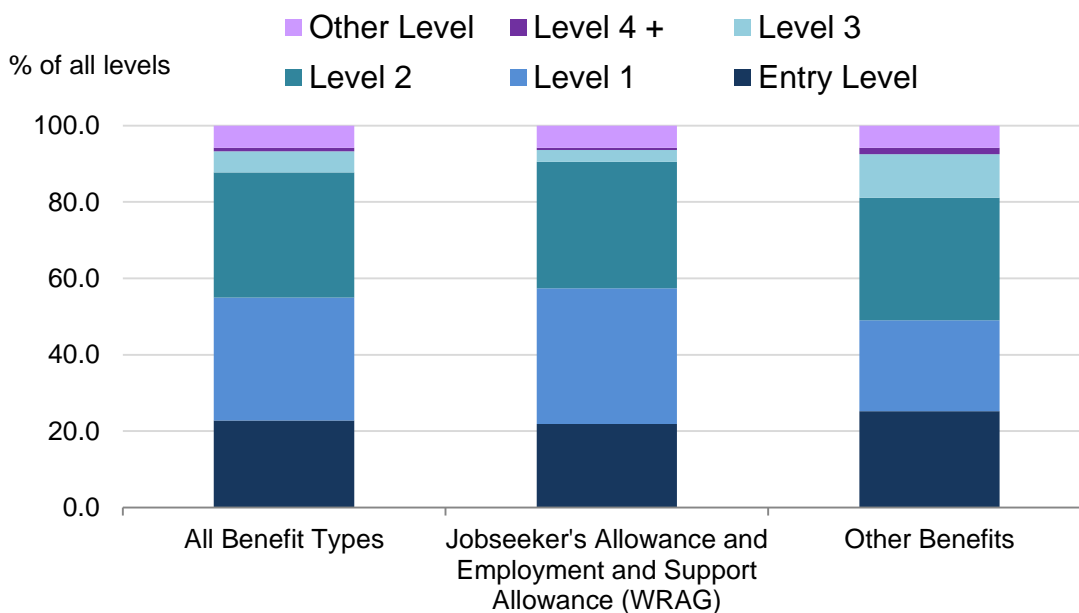
1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is used.

2. 'Other Benefits' includes: Other Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Income Support, Severe Disablement Allowance, Pension Credit, Passported Incapacity Benefit. It does not include Universal Credit claims.

### Highest Level of Learning

Data for 2014/15 indicates that the highest level of study for learners on benefit aged 19-64 was Level 2 or below at 87.7 per cent (Figure 2). The proportion is slightly higher at 90.5 per cent, when looking at learners claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG).

**Figure 2: Prevalence of highest qualification level for learners on benefit aged 19-64 by benefit type, 2014/15**



An assessment of the highest qualification level studied for by JSA and ESA (WRAG) claimants for 2014/15 (Table 4) showed that:

- 57.4 per cent studied at Level 1 and Entry Level.
- 33.1 per cent studied at Level 2.

Of those on other benefit types:

- 49.0 per cent studied at Level 1 and Entry Level.
- 32.1 per cent studied at Level 2.

**Table 4: Highest level of learning by adults aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64 years by benefit type, 2014/15**

Level <sup>2</sup>	All Benefit Types		of which			
			Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (WRAG)		Other Benefits	
Entry Level	122,600	22.8%	82,400	21.8%	40,200	25.2%
Level 1	172,700	32.1%	134,600	35.6%	38,100	23.8%
Level 2	176,200	32.8%	124,900	33.1%	51,300	32.1%
Level 3	30,100	5.6%	11,900	3.2%	18,100	11.4%
Level 4 +	4,700	0.9%	2,000	0.5%	2,700	1.7%
Unassigned <sup>3</sup>	31,200	5.8%	22,000	5.8%	9,300	5.8%
<b>All Levels</b>	<b>537,500</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>377,800</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>159,700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is used.

2. For further information on different levels of qualifications see <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>

3. Unassigned courses are largely mandatory aims taken to compliment academic studies, for example tutorial sessions.

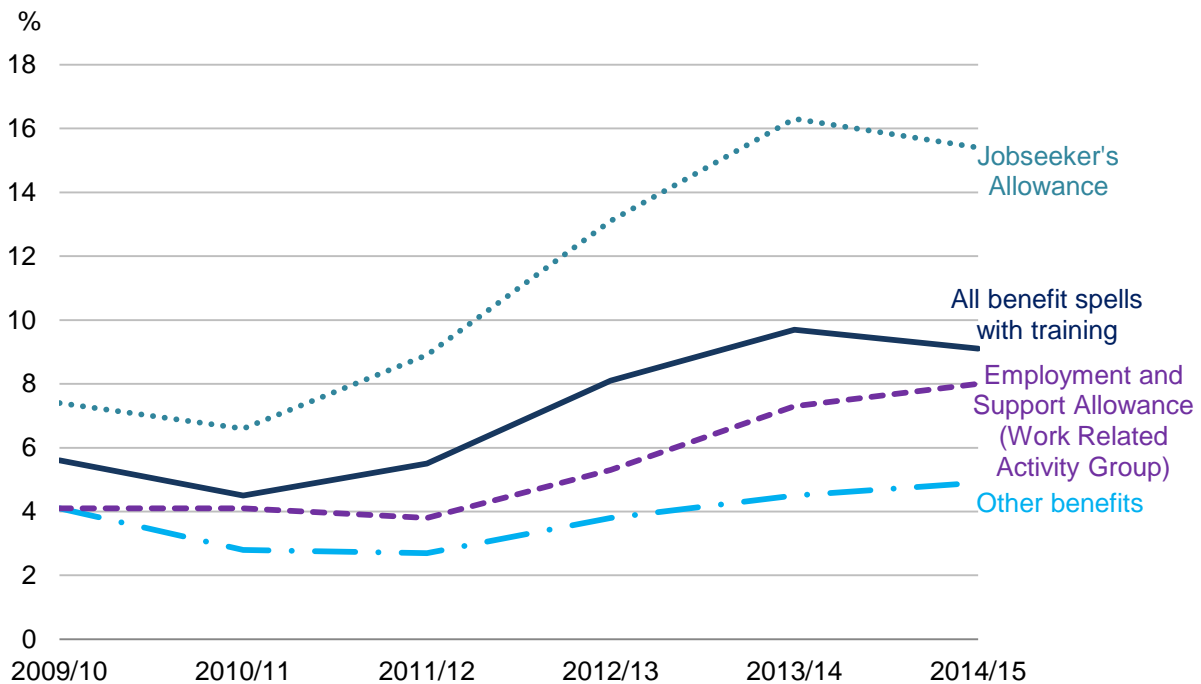
## Benefit Spells with Training

There were 546,600 benefit spells with training in 2014/15, a decrease of 20.9 per cent on the previous academic year.

The 349,500 Jobseeker's Allowance benefit spells that involved training in 2014/15, made up 15.4 per cent of all JSA benefit spells, down slightly from 16.3 per cent in 2013/14.

The overall proportion of benefit spells with training for learners aged 19-64 years of all benefit spells fell slightly from 9.7 per cent in 2013/14 to 9.1 per cent in 2014/15 (Figure 3) and from 12.9 per cent to 12.2 per cent, respectively for the 19-24 age group. The decrease has been driven by the decline in the number of 'All benefit spells'.

**Figure 3: Proportion of benefit spells with training by benefit type for benefit claimants aged 19-64 years, 2009/10 to 2014/15**



The proportion of JSA benefit spells with training for all age groups decreased from 16.3 per cent in 2013/14 to 15.4 per cent in 2014/15 (Table 5). The proportion of JSA benefit spells with training for the 19-24 age group decreased slightly from 15.5 per cent to 15.1 per cent (Table 9, Supplementary Tables).

**Table 5: Benefit Spells by Benefit Type and Training Status – Aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64, 2009/10 to 2014/15**

Benefit Type		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Jobseeker's Allowance	Benefit spells with training <sup>2</sup>	299,200	263,100	342,700	488,400	494,000	349,500
	All Benefit Spells <sup>3</sup>	4,044,900	3,959,300	3,842,800	3,717,300	3,025,900	2,271,600
	<b>% with Training</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)	Benefit spells with training <sup>2</sup>	4,700	7,500	13,300	25,800	33,800	33,200
	All Benefit Spells <sup>3</sup>	115,600	182,600	351,700	489,900	459,900	417,300
	<b>% with Training</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>
Other Benefits	Benefit spells with training <sup>2</sup>	196,700	127,100	121,500	154,500	162,900	163,900
	All Benefit Spells <sup>3</sup>	4,850,000	4,620,400	4,525,700	4,099,300	3,605,200	3,326,600
	<b>% with Training</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	Benefit spells with training <sup>2</sup>	500,600	397,700	477,500	668,700	690,800	546,600
	All Benefit Spells <sup>3</sup>	9,010,500	8,762,300	8,720,300	8,306,400	7,091,000	6,015,500
	<b>% with Training</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is used.

2. A benefit spell is defined as a continuous period of time claiming the same benefit. Benefit spells with training refer to benefit claims which occurred in the academic year of reference where the benefit claimant started training.

3. 'All benefit spells' are all spells over the course of the year and are therefore not comparable with the claimant count or other published snapshots of benefit data.

JSA or ESA (WRAG) claims accounted for 70.0 per cent of benefit spells with training in 2014/15, compared with 76.4 per cent in 2013/14. Before 2014/15, there was an increasing trend in JSA or ESA claims accounting for the majority of benefit spells with training.

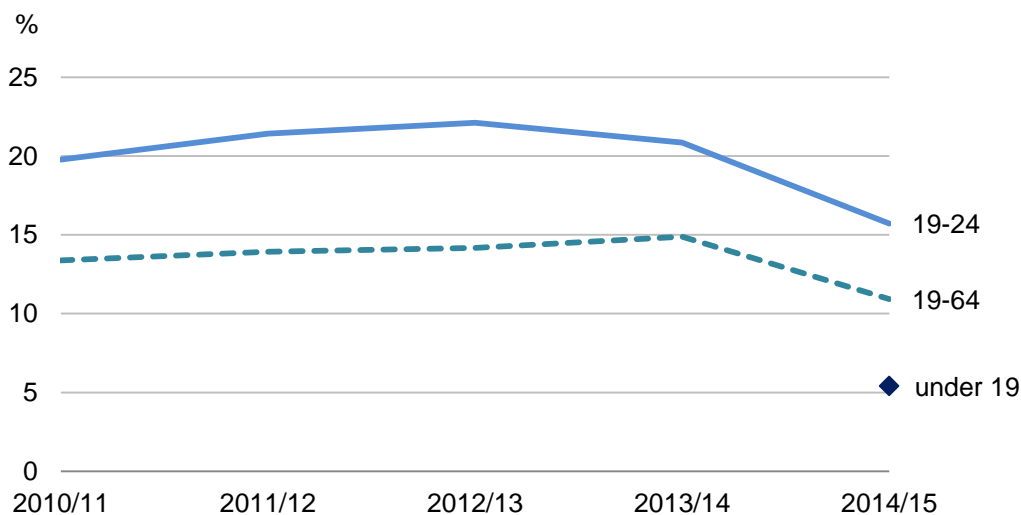
## Apprenticeships and Traineeships

### Learners who claimed benefits up to 6 months before the start of Apprenticeship

In 2014/15, there were 39,500 apprenticeship starts by learners aged 19-64 years claiming benefits in the six months before starting their apprenticeship. This is a 13.8 per cent decrease in overall numbers from 45,900 in 2013/14. This decrease in apprenticeship starts is smaller than the 20.5 per cent fall for all learners on benefits at the start of learning.

The fall is driven by the national decrease in those on benefits. Additionally, the increase in overall apprentices (particularly for the 25 and over age group) means the percentage of apprentices claiming benefits in the six months before their apprenticeship has decreased from 14.9 per cent in 2013/14 to 10.9 per cent in 2014/15 (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Proportion of all apprentices who claimed benefits up to 6 months before apprenticeship start by age, 2010/11 to 2014/15**



The majority (62.2 per cent) of apprenticeship starts by learners claiming benefits six months before starting an apprenticeship were among those aged 19-24 years (Tables 6 and 7, Supplementary Tables). For this age group, there were 24,600 learners claiming benefits before starting an apprenticeship, of which 20,000 learners were claiming JSA or ESA. This represents 15.7 per cent of all apprenticeship starts among learners aged 19-24 claiming benefits in the six months before starting an apprenticeship in 2014/15 compared with 20.9 per cent in 2013/14.



**Table 6: Apprenticeship starts by learners aged 19-64 who claimed benefit before training by benefit type, level of learning, 2010/11 to 2014/15**

	Number of Apprenticeship Starts														
	2010/11			2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15		
	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels
<b>All Apprenticeships started<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>193,500</b>	<b>115,300</b>	<b>308,800</b>	<b>222,800</b>	<b>147,700</b>	<b>370,500</b>	<b>205,000</b>	<b>176,300</b>	<b>381,300</b>	<b>210,400</b>	<b>97,900</b>	<b>308,300</b>	<b>206,100</b>	<b>155,700</b>	<b>361,800</b>
<b>Apprenticeships started by learners observed claiming benefits during 3 months prior starting the apprenticeship</b>	23,200	5,900	29,100	29,800	7,800	37,600	29,400	9,500	38,900	26,700	6,400	33,100	21,300	6,500	27,800
of which															
Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)	19,000	4,200	23,200	25,200	5,800	30,900	25,400	7,300	32,700	22,200	4,900	27,100	16,000	4,300	20,300
Other benefits	4,200	1,700	5,900	4,600	2,000	6,700	4,000	2,200	6,200	4,600	1,500	6,000	5,300	2,200	7,500
<b>Apprenticeships started by learners observed claiming benefits during 6 months before starting the Apprenticeship</b>	32,400	8,900	41,300	40,400	11,200	51,600	40,300	13,600	54,000	36,800	9,100	45,900	30,100	9,500	39,500
of which															
Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)	26,800	6,700	33,500	34,300	8,600	42,900	35,100	10,700	45,800	30,900	7,100	38,000	23,200	6,600	29,800
Other benefits	5,600	2,200	7,800	6,000	2,600	8,700	5,300	2,900	8,200	5,900	1,900	7,900	6,900	2,900	9,700

All Apprenticeships include any Apprenticeship starter matched to either a DWP or HMRC record

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their Apprenticeship.
2. Including Apprenticeships started by learners not claiming before the Apprenticeship.

**Table 7: Proportion of Apprenticeship starts by learners aged 19-64 who claimed benefits before training by benefit type, level of learning, 2010/11 to 2014/15**

	Percentage of Apprenticeship Starts														
	2010/11			2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15		
	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels	Level 2	Level 3 and Higher	All Levels
<b>All Apprenticeships started<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Apprenticeships started by learners observed claiming benefit during 3 months before starting the Apprenticeship</b>	12.0%	5.1%	9.4%	13.4%	5.3%	10.1%	14.3%	5.4%	10.2%	12.7%	6.5%	10.7%	10.3%	4.2%	7.7%
of which															
Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)	9.8%	3.6%	7.5%	11.3%	3.9%	8.3%	12.4%	4.1%	8.6%	10.6%	5.0%	8.8%	7.8%	2.8%	5.6%
Other benefits	2.2%	1.5%	1.9%	2.1%	1.4%	1.8%	2.0%	1.2%	1.6%	2.2%	1.5%	1.9%	2.6%	1.4%	2.1%
<b>Apprenticeships started by learners observed claiming benefit during 6 months before starting the Apprenticeship</b>	16.7%	7.7%	13.4%	18.1%	7.6%	13.9%	19.7%	7.7%	14.2%	17.5%	9.3%	14.9%	14.6%	6.1%	10.9%
of which															
Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)	13.9%	5.8%	10.8%	15.4%	5.8%	11.6%	17.1%	6.1%	12.0%	14.7%	7.3%	12.3%	11.3%	4.2%	8.2%
Other benefits	2.9%	1.9%	2.5%	2.7%	1.8%	2.3%	2.6%	1.6%	2.2%	2.8%	1.9%	2.6%	3.3%	1.9%	2.7%

All Apprenticeships include any Apprenticeship starter matched to either a DWP or HMRC record

1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their Apprenticeship.
2. Including Apprenticeships started by learners not claiming before the Apprenticeship.

## Traineeship starts

There were 7,800 traineeship starts aged 19-24 in 2014/15<sup>6</sup>. Of the 5,600 traineeships started by learners aged 19-24 claiming benefit in the matched dataset there were

- 4,900 claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG).

**Table 8: Traineeship starts by benefit type, 2014/15**

	Age <sup>1</sup>	All Benefit Types	of which			
			Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (WRAG)		Other Benefits	
Traineeship Starts whilst on Benefit	Under 19	1,700	1,300	75.7%	400	24.3%
	19-24	5,600	4,900	88.6%	600	11.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>7,300</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>85.6%</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>14.4%</b>

1. Age is reported as age of learner at the beginning of the 2014/15 academic year.

The overall number of traineeships is not directly comparable with figures in the previous publication due to a number of policy changes that took place in 2014/15 to extend eligibility to learners aged 16-18 and 24. Further details on policy changes on traineeships can be found on page 24.

## Learning aims by benefit type

The number of learning aims started by benefit claimants aged 19-64 years decreased by 21.4 per cent from 1,680,800 in 2013/14 to 1,320,900 in 2014/15, of which

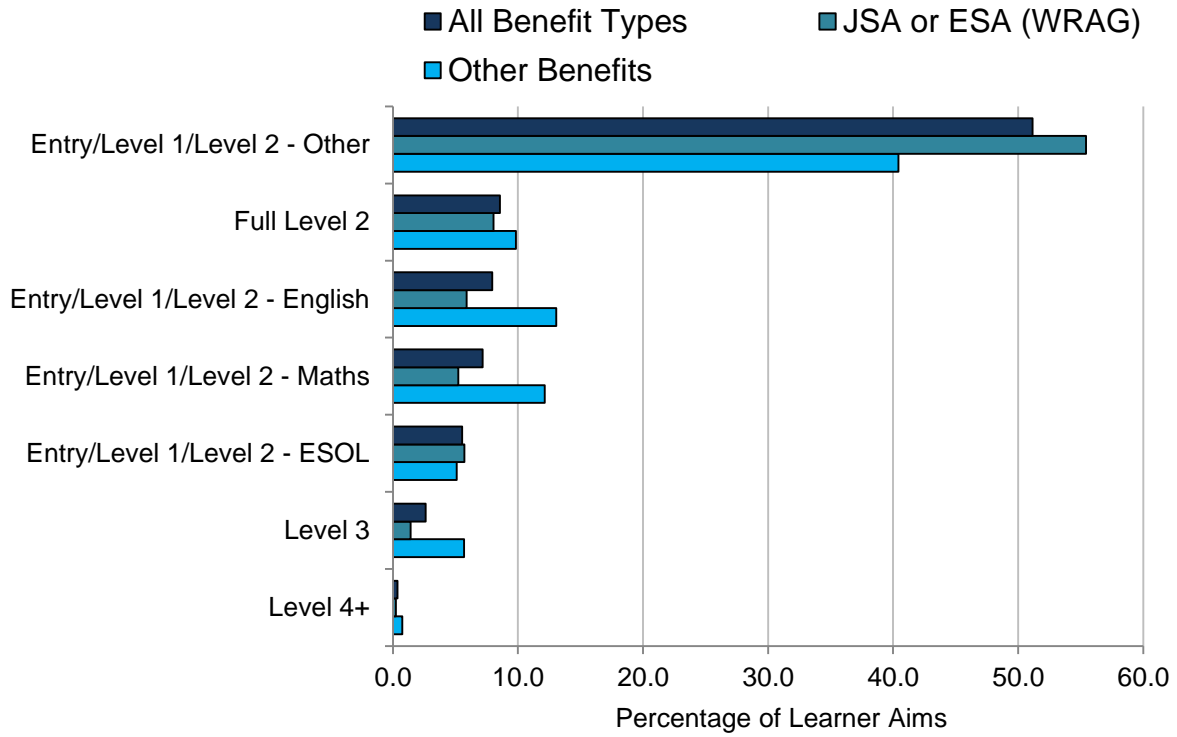
- 7.9 per cent was for English at or below Level 2 (Figure 5)
- 7.2 per cent was for Maths at or below Level 2
- 5.5 per cent was for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at or below Level 2

When looking specifically at the 945,500 learning aims studied by learners claiming JSA or ESA (WRAG):

- 5.9 per cent was for English at or below Level 2
- 5.2 per cent for Maths at or below Level 2
- 5.7 per cent for ESOL at or below Level 2

<sup>6</sup> Further Education and Skills Statistical First Release

**Figure 5: Proportion of learner aims studied by learners aged 19-64 by benefit type, 2014/15**



**Table 9: Learning aims by highest level of learning, subject and benefit type for learners aged<sup>1</sup> 19-64, 2014/15**

Level <sup>2</sup>	All Benefit Types	of which					
		Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (WRAG)			Other Benefits		
Entry Level	Entry - Other	184,600	14.0%	125,000	13.2%	59,600	15.9%
	Entry - English	49,700	3.8%	27,300	2.9%	22,400	6.0%
	Entry - Maths	37,900	2.9%	19,900	2.1%	18,100	4.8%
	Entry - ESOL	65,400	5.0%	49,200	5.2%	16,100	4.3%
	<b>Total Entry Level</b>	<b>337,600</b>	<b>25.6%</b>	<b>221,400</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>116,200</b>	<b>31.0%</b>
Level 1	Level 1 - Other	370,700	28.1%	302,300	32.0%	68,500	18.3%
	Level 1 - English	29,100	2.2%	16,100	1.7%	13,000	3.5%
	Level 1 - Maths	31,900	2.4%	17,500	1.9%	14,400	3.8%
	Level 1 - ESOL	5,900	0.4%	3,600	0.4%	2,300	0.6%
	<b>Total Level 1</b>	<b>437,600</b>	<b>33.1%</b>	<b>339,500</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>98,200</b>	<b>26.2%</b>
Level 2	Level 2 - Other	120,500	9.1%	96,800	10.2%	23,700	6.3%
	Level 2 - English	26,100	2.0%	12,400	1.3%	13,600	3.6%
	Level 2 - Maths	25,100	1.9%	12,000	1.3%	13,100	3.5%
	Level 2 - ESOL	1,800	0.1%	1,100	0.1%	700	0.2%
	Full Level 2	113,000	8.6%	76,100	8.0%	36,900	9.8%
	<b>Total Level 2</b>	<b>286,500</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>198,500</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>88,000</b>	<b>23.4%</b>
Level 3	Level 3	9,900	0.7%	4,500	0.5%	5,400	1.4%
	Full Level 3	24,700	1.9%	8,800	0.9%	15,900	4.2%
	<b>Total Level 3</b>	<b>34,600</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>13,300</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>21,300</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
	<b>Level 4+</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
	<b>Unassigned<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>219,500</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>170,700</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>48,700</b>	<b>13.0%</b>
<b>All Levels</b>		<b>1,320,900</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>945,500</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>375,300</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

An aim is a course a learner is studying and is counted in the year the learning started. The table above refers to aims taken  
 1. Age is defined as the age of the learner at the start of their learning in the current academic year. When there are more learning spells in the academic year, the age at the start of the first learning spell is used.

2. For further information on different levels of qualifications see <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean>

3. Unassigned courses are largely mandatory aims taken to compliment academic studies, for example tutorial sessions.

# Supplementary Tables

The list below shows supplementary tables which are available as part of this publication. These additional tables include further detail such as a breakdown of some of the main tables for those aged 19-24 years and by JCP District. Tables are available at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-for-benefit-claimants](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-for-benefit-claimants)

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b><u>Table 1</u></b>  | Overview of Further Education Training for Benefit Claimants by Academic Year, Age 19-64 and 19-24  |
| <b><u>Table 2</u></b>  | Learners by Benefit Status and Academic Year, Age 19-64 and 19-24   |
| <b><u>Table 3</u></b>  | Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning by Benefit Type, 2014/15, Age 19-64 and 19-24  |
| <b><u>Table 4</u></b>  | Learners on Benefit at the Start of Learning by Highest Level of Learning and Benefit Type, 2014/15, Age 19-64 and 19-24                              |
| <b><u>Table 5</u></b>  | Demographic Summary of Learners on Benefit by Benefit Type, 2014/15, Age 19-64  |
| <b><u>Table 6</u></b>  | Apprenticeship Starts by Learners who Claimed Benefit before Training by Benefit Type, Level of Learning and Academic Year                            |
| <b><u>Table 7</u></b>  | Apprenticeship Starts by Learners who Claimed Benefit before Training by Benefit Type, Level of Learning and Academic Year (% of all Apprenticeships) |
| <b><u>Table 8</u></b>  | Traineeship Starts by Learners by Benefit Type, 2014/15   |
| <b><u>Table 9</u></b>  | Benefit Spells by Benefit Type, Training Status and Academic Year, Age 19-64 and 19-24  |
| <b><u>Table 10</u></b> | Benefit Spells with Training by Point During Benefit Claim when Training Started, Benefit Type and Academic Year, Age 19-64                           |
| <b><u>Table 11</u></b> | Benefit Spells with Training by Benefit Type, Training Status and JCP District, 2014/15, Age 19-64  |
| <b><u>Table 12</u></b> | Aims by Highest Level of Learning, Subject Learned and Benefit Type, 2014/15, Age 19-64 and 19-24   |
| <b><u>Table 13</u></b> | Aims by Planned Duration, Benefit Type, Level and Subject of Learning, 2014/15, Age 19-64   |
| <b><u>Table 14</u></b> | Aims by Monthly Starts and Benefit Type, 2009/10 – 2014/15, Age 19-64   |

# Annex A: Additional Information

## Related Statistics

Statistics on Skills Conditionality and sector-based work academy (pre-employment training) starts can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/pre-work-programme-and-get-britain-working](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pre-work-programme-and-get-britain-working)

Statistics on all Further Education can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education)

## Future Publications

The series is intended to be updated once a year. The next publication, looking at data for the 2015/16 academic year, will be published in 2017.

The publication date will be confirmed on the UK Statistics Authority's Publication Hub ([www.statistics.gov.uk/hub](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub)) prior to the publication.

## Context

The data presented covers the period from the 2009/10 to 2014/15 academic years. Over this time, changes in economic conditions have resulted in a lower volume of benefit claimants and changing skills provision. There have also been changes to:

- how claimants are referred from Jobcentre Plus from August 2011 (Skills Conditionality); and
- the structure of the benefits system including the phase rollout of Universal Credit (UC), the withdrawal of Incapacity Benefit, the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance the phased rollout of Personalised Independence Payments (PIP), replacing Disability Living Allowance, and the movement of lone parents with older children to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).

The patterns observed in Further Education training for benefit claimants are therefore greatly affected by the context within which they are set.

For more information on the rollout of UC, please see Annex B. Universal Credit claimants are not included in this statistics release, meaning these statistics will include an under-count of the number of benefit claimants participating in Further Education.

## Policy changes affecting the 2014/15 figures

The Government maintained a focus on support for people who are unemployed, in order to equip them with the skills to help them enter and progress in sustainable employment. BIS and DWP continued to work to promote improvement in how the skills and employment systems worked together to identify and address the skills barriers faced by unemployed people.

In 2014/15, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) training offer for unemployed learners in receipt of a DWP out of work benefit remained unchanged compared to 2013/14. The offer for the unemployed is equally available to the long and short term unemployed. People on

JSA, ESA (WRAG), and those on UC mandated to training by the Jobcentre were able to access fully funded training to help them into work. In 2014/15, the SFA offer included specific qualifications in security.

Mandation to training provision for JSA, ESA (WRAG), IS and UC claimants (in the All Work-Related Requirements Group) continued under the Skills Conditionality policy, and access to SFA-funded sector-specific pre-employment training was available through sector-based work academies.

There has been an expansion of the Apprenticeship programme since 2010/11 as a result of increased government investment in adult apprenticeships. More recently apprenticeship policy has focused on raising standards, improving the quality and introducing minimum durations of apprenticeships. This means some learners find it more difficult or take longer to complete their apprenticeship.

In August 2013, 24+ Advanced Learning Loans were introduced and withdrawn for apprenticeships in March 2014. This appears to have affected learner numbers on Level 3 and above courses and apprenticeships for those aged 24 and over in 2013/14. This should be noted when comparing the 2014/15 volumes with 2013/14.

Official statistics on further education and skills on learner participation, outcomes and level of highest qualification held can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/513851/SFR\\_complementary\\_March\\_2016\\_QAR\\_Update.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/513851/SFR_complementary_March_2016_QAR_Update.pdf)

For traineeships, a number of policy changes were introduced that took place in the 2014/15 academic year to extend eligibility and remove barriers preventing benefit claimants participating in traineeships:

- Eligibility was extended to individuals who had reached the age of 24, from 23 in the 13/14 academic year;
- Regulations were amended so that JSA claimants could participate for up to 30 hours a week on a traineeship, and retain their eligibility to JSA, removing the previous 16 hour per week limit.
- To further increase access to traineeships, DWP laid regulations in March 2015 that allow all young people, including those described as Qualifying Young People (predominantly 16 to 18 year olds, to benefit from full-time participation in a traineeship whilst maintaining entitlement to their DWP benefit.

From April 2014 in England all new JSA claimants and UC claimants subject to intensive work search requirements are now screened to identify those with English speaking and listening skills below Entry Level 2 (expected ability at age 7) at the initial work search interview. Identified claimants are mandated to a full assessment completed by a provider and where appropriate, mandated to attend English Language Training to improve their language skills (English Language Requirements, ELR). Mandatory referrals to ELR provision continued in the 2014/15 academic year.

The JSA claimant commitment was fully rolled out to all Jobcentre Plus offices in Great Britain. The claimant commitment allowed work coaches to better clarify conditions of



benefit entitlement and capture job search plans from day one of a claim leading to higher levels of compliance with mandatory activity, including training.

## Changes in this release

In previous year's publications, statistics have only been published for learners who have attained the age of 19, as described in Section 87 (4) (a) of the Education & Skills Act 2008 ('ESA 2008'), which allows the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to share analytical data.

However amendments in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 ('SBEE 2015'), which received Royal Assent in March 2015, as outlined in section 78 of the SBEE 2015 have removed the restriction that data can only be shared for individuals must have attained the age of 19.

This now means that this publication includes statistics on benefit claimants, who were under the age of 19 when they started an apprenticeship or traineeship.

## Jobcentre Plus geography

The JCP district structure used in Tables 11 is the structure as of the 1st April 2015. From the 1st April 2015, Thames Valley District had been disbanded and the offices within that District moved to Surrey and Sussex District, and Gloucestershire and West of England District. Those Districts were been renamed; Berkshire, Surrey and Sussex District and Avon, Severn and Thames District.

Care should be taken in interpreting geographical variations in Table 11. Benefit claimants are recorded in the JCP district of the office they are registered at and volumes will be affected by characteristics of the local economy. The JCP district where the claimant is registered is not necessarily the same district where the training was delivered.

Note that in April 2016 Greater Manchester East and West District was renamed Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire District was renamed Cheshire. Table 11 refers to 2014/15, so it is not affected by these changes.

# Annex B: Matching Process, Data Coverage and Quality

## Data Sources

The statistics in the publication are produced using the ILR-WPLS matched dataset:

- Individualised Learner Record (ILR) contains information on Skills Funding Agency funded FE provision from 2002/03 to 2014/15.
- Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) is a long established dataset which comprises DWP benefit data and earnings and employment data from HMRC:
  - P45 employment data collated by HMRC from income tax records from 1998/99.
  - P14 earnings data collated by HMRC from tax processing from 2003/04.
  - National Benefits Database (NBD) covering benefit records from 1999.

## Matching Process

The match is carried out by DWP's Information Exploitation and Security Directorate working in partnership with BIS, DWP Partnerships Division and the FE Data Service to ensure data is transferred efficiently and securely, and appropriate quality assurance is carried out prior to the data being used.

The ILR has been matched to the DWP Master Index<sup>7</sup> and HMRC P45 data using National Insurance Number (NINO) and five personal details fields: Initial of Forename, Soundex<sup>8</sup> of Surname, Date of birth, Postcode Sector and Gender.

For a match to be counted one of the following criteria must have been met:

- NINO matches and at least 3 of personal details match; or
- NINO does not match but FIRST TWO letters of forename, Soundex of surname, date of birth all match, plus one of either gender or postcode; or
- NINO does not match but date of birth, gender and FULL postcode (i.e. not postcode sector) all match.

The records are then coded to indicate the strength of the match using a traffic light system. The strongest match is where there is a direct match on the National Insurance Number and three or more personal detail fields, with the weakest accepted match where date of birth, gender and full postcode match.

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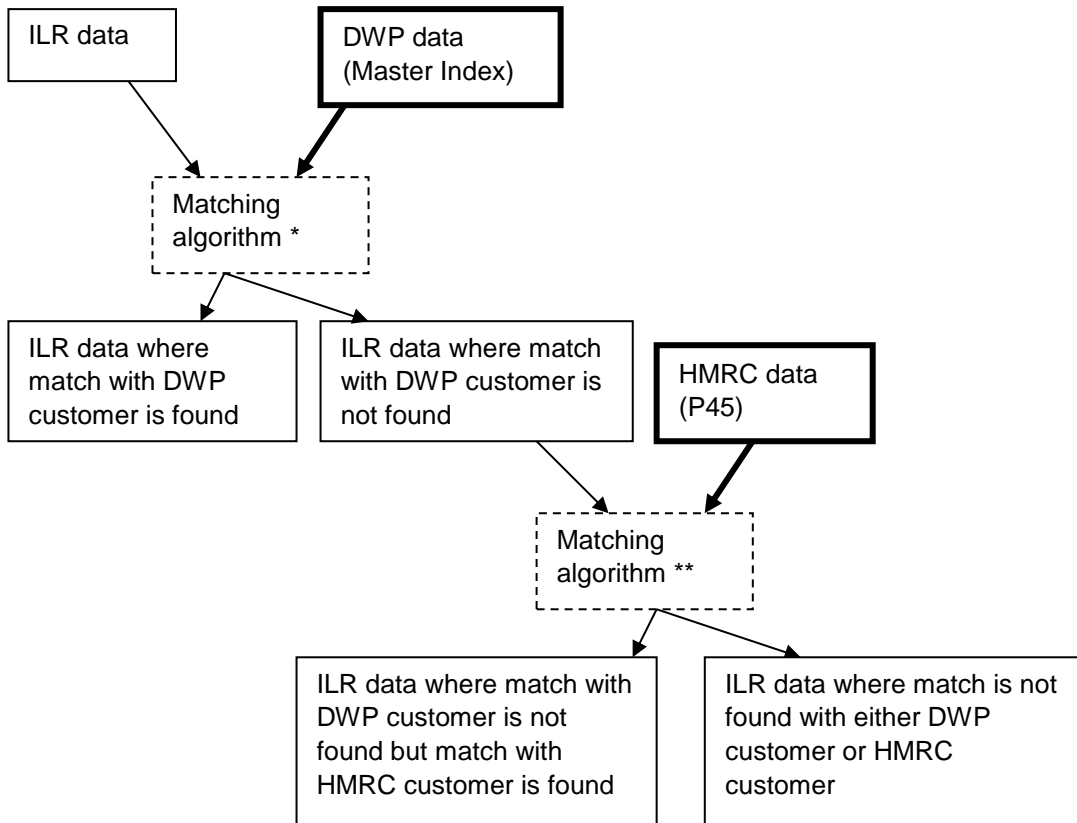
<sup>7</sup> The DWP Master Index and HMRC P45 datasets are subsets of the WPLS dataset.

<sup>8</sup> SAS function which turns a surname into a code representing what it sounds like, which allows some flexibility for different spellings. For example Wilson=Willson.

The matching algorithm, based on established processes, was developed through an iterative process and has been fully tested for accuracy.

Currently there is no attempt to rematch learners who have failed to match in the past, although the latest employment and benefit data for those learners who previously matched is transferred each quarter.

The flow diagram below illustrates the steps taken in the overall matching process:



DWP analysts are given access to DWP customer data, HMRC data for DWP customers, and ILR data for DWP customers for cases where a match is found at \*.

BIS analysts are given access to DWP customer data for cases where a match is found at \* and HMRC data for cases where a match is found at either \* or \*\*.

All records accessed for analysis are anonymous so that individuals cannot be identified. The personally identifying records used in the actual matching process are accessed under strict security controls.

## Match Rates

The match rate of individuals on the ILR to DWP and/or HMRC records has consistently been around 90 per cent. For 2014/15, 87 per cent of individuals aged 16 plus on the ILR were matched to DWP and/or HMRC records.

The match rates for ILR-WPLS have been high (91 per cent in the 2013/14 academic year for learners aged 19 plus) and consistent over time although will rarely reach 100% for the following reasons:

- Some learners will not have a benefit and/or employment record.
- Due to data quality issues and data mismatches, not all learners who have a benefit and/or employment record may be picked up by the data matching process.

The 2014/15 match rate is a reduction from the match rate for the 2013/14 academic year due to the inclusion of under 19s in the matching. The youngest learners have a slightly poorer match rate due to some of them being less likely to have been in employment or on benefit, and so not having a corresponding record in the WPLS data. If they have been in employment they are more likely to be low earners and so less likely to be in the PAYE tax data.

For statistics on post-16 education and skills:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-held](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-held)

For statistics on benefit caseloads and flows data:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-statistics-tabulation-tool](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-statistics-tabulation-tool)

## Potential issues with the match

The match rate is fairly stable across a range of demographics. However, there are certain groups for which the rates are marginally poorer than overall.

Match rates are poorer for the 'White Other' ethnic group. A large proportion of this category are non-UK nationals and are less likely to have interacted with the employment and benefits system. There is also a lower match rate for the Chinese ethnic group. We believe this is partly due to the difficulties of matching Chinese names.

The youngest learners also have a slightly poorer match rate. It's probable that this is due to them being less likely to have been in employment or on benefit. If they have been in employment they are more likely to be low earners and so less likely to be in the PAYE tax data.

## Data Coverage and Quality

Once the match is established, the next step is to merge the different data files (employment, benefits, and learners) on the basis of the person level record linkage defined by the matching. The coverage of the different datasets is set out below.

### Benefit Data

Benefit data are taken from the underlying DWP payments systems and are supplemented by the information entered by Jobcentre advisers. The data therefore captures basic

information accurately, but non-compulsory fields in either the labour market system or the payment system may be incomplete. Due to the size and technical complexity, these systems are not accessed directly, but at regular intervals scans are taken that build up a longitudinal picture from repeated snapshots of the data.

Start dates are entered on to the system and are accurate dates of benefit payment, thus provide certain timing and duration of benefit claim. However, while JSA dates have very few discrepancies, due to the way the data is scanned the end dates recorded for other benefits may diverge to some extent from the events they are recording. The potential discrepancy varies from up to two weeks for ESA to up to six weeks for IB.

## Universal Credit claimants

The National Benefits Database (NBD) does not currently include any information relating to claims to Universal Credit. This means that Universal Credit claimants are not included in the matched ILR-WPLS dataset, and this statistics publication does not include any learning aims started by individuals whilst on Universal Credit.

During the 2014/15 academic year which is the scope of this publication, the extent of this under-reporting of training for benefit claimants is expected to be higher than in the 2013/14 academic year. The national rollout of Universal Credit to new claims from single people who otherwise would have claimed Jobseeker's Allowance commenced in February 2015. By the end of the 2015 calendar year, Universal Credit was being delivered in over 500 jobcentres across Great Britain, and the national expansion to all new single claims completed in spring 2016 with all 714 jobcentres in Great Britain now delivering Universal Credit.

Since April 2016, Universal Credit has been operating in every Jobcentre office in Great Britain for single jobseekers. As of July 2015, there were 77,100 Universal Credit claimants with 49,150 recorded as being out of work and in receipt of Universal Credit.<sup>9</sup>

Further work is being undertaken to assess whether Universal Credit claims can be brought into the matching dataset to allow future publications to include training undertaken by Universal Credit claimants, as well as other new benefits such as the Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

For more information on the number of starts to Universal Credit, and the current caseload, please see the latest official statistics publication:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics)

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<sup>9</sup> Statistics for the number of people on Universal Credit relate to the second Thursday of each month. A limited test of the full Universal Credit service was launched in Sutton, South London on 26th November 2014, and has expanded to other areas since. Please note that these statistics do not currently include statistics covering the full Universal Credit service.

## Personal Independence Payment claimants

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) helps with some of the extra costs caused by long-term disability, ill-health or terminal ill-health. From 8th April 2013 DWP started to replace Disability Living Allowance for working age people with Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

The National Benefits Database (NBD) does not currently include any information relating to claims to Personal Independence Payment claims. These claimants are not included in the matched ILR-WPLS dataset, and this statistics publication does not include any learning aims started by individuals whilst on Personal Independence Payments in the 'Other Benefits' category in the tables..

As of July 2015, there were 422,150 PIP claims in payment.

For more information on the number of registrations, clearances and awards made to Personal Independence Payments, and the current caseload, please see the latest official statistics publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

## Employment Data

The employment and earnings administrative data largely covers only those who pay tax through PAYE through employer submission of P45 and P14. The core purpose of this process is to collect tax from those who are eligible to pay it through this mechanism, as such there is not complete coverage due to the taxation system. Individuals who are low earners and fall below the tax threshold may not be included if their records are not included in the data provided to HMRC, although for large employers these are thought to be included due to methods of data transfer.

In addition any earnings recorded through Self Assessment (SA) will not be in the data. The lack of SA data means that the self-employed will not be in the data and the earnings of the highest paid are likely to be underestimated as they are most likely to have additional earnings recorded through SA.

For the purposes of collecting taxes accurate start dates are not required, just the fiscal year and earnings. Therefore a number of returns are found to be missing start dates due to the employer not forwarding a timely P45. The default dates recorded in the dataset are either 6 April (the first day of the tax year), or where only an end date is known as the day before that end date. Similarly for records where the employment is known to have come to an end within a tax year but the end date is not known the record is given a default 5 April end date, the last day of the tax year.

In addition there are several instances of duplicate start dates where more than one employment spell starts on the same day, or conversely duplicate end dates where more than one employment spell ends on the same day. These may arise from administrative processes occurring within HMRC, e.g. in relation to Tax Credits.

## Learner data

The Skills Funding Agency requirements for personal data, including National Insurance Numbers, vary by the type of provision provided.

Other personal details fields have high completion rates although there is some use of defaults where information is not known and particular groups such as offender learners have information withheld.

The dates of learning can be assumed accurate to within a week. Key data fields are tied to funding therefore there is a strong incentive for providers to ensure the information returned is accurate.

As the data sharing only covers Skills Funding Agency funded learning it does not include learning done outside of England and it also excludes learning funded through the Higher Education route.

## Time lags

All data used in this process is drawn from administrative sources, which take time to process and collate. There are therefore lags between the reference period and availability of the dataset for analysis.

**Benefit data** taken from the National Benefits Database has lags in completeness. Additional clerical claims, appeals and other complex situations add to the changes in later versions of the database. This retrospection in the data means initial records appear after three months while the timescale for complete data is approximately six months.

**Employment data** is matched to DWP data on a regular basis. There are cleaning rules applied to this data, which identify old records when updated with new information. As new information can come through about a job after it has ended this is a source of constant change, although the data is considered complete after six months.

**Learner data** is collated from returns by colleges with the provisional data collected to date generally published on a quarterly basis. Returns are not generally complete until up to six months after the end of the academic year, which runs from 1 August to 31 July.

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